



2021–2022 Preservation Trust Fund Public Access Grant Application

Visit vof.org/ptf for more info.Submit questions and completed application to grants@vof.org.

Applications due by 11:59pm on Friday, August 20, 2021.

Note: This application and any materials provided may be shared with the public without any notice to applicant.

Application Assistance

VOF staff are available to assist at any time during the application process. Please contact the grant program manager at (434) 282-7054 or by email at grants@vof.org to discuss the PTF Program or potential ideas for a proposal. We can help determine a local VOF staff contact who may assist with developing your application, telling the story of the project, scheduling a site visit, or selecting support materials for submission.

Applicant Information

Organization

Contact person

Phone number

Email address

Mailing address

Type of applicant/ partner organization	Individual Tribal	Non-profit* VOF	Local Other	State	Regional
<i>*If you are a registered non-profit, provide documentation that you are registered and in good standing with the State Corporation Commission. The URL of the organization's SCC Business Entity Details page will suffice: https://cis.scc.virginia.gov/EntitySearch/Index</i>					
To qualify for a PTF Public Access grant, the open-space land must be protected through a property interest conveyed to a locality or VOF. For more information on the appropriate property interest, please refer to the Application Guide. Select the type of project the application is for:					
A locality acquiring a property interest under the Open Space Land Act.					
Person/organization conveying to VOF a property interest under the Open Space Land Act.					
Partner (required if applicant is a person or organization): Please provide documentation of partner support. If requesting VOF as holder of real-estate interest, please contact VOF at grants@vof.org before submitting the application. VOF will review request and determine if they are best partner.					

Project Information

Project name

This name will be used in public relations and grant documents should funding be awarded.

Project location (latitude/longitude required,* other location info such as street address or tax parcel ID optional)

Latitude

Longitude

Other

GIS shapefile of property available? Yes No Total acres to be protected

Grant funding request (min. request \$10,000; past grants have averaged \$100,000)

Would you like to be considered for any other VOF grant program if eligible? Yes No

*See application guide for directions on using Google Maps or contact grants@vof.org to ask for help getting lat/long coordinates.

Provide a brief (500 characters max) summary of this project in the space below.

Public Access Characteristics

Calendar

The project site will be open to the public daily (excluding nights/holidays).

The project site will be open to the public at least 75% of the year.

The project site will be open to the public 50-75% of the year.

The project site will be open to the public less than 50% of the year.

Additional information:

Area

100% of the project site will be open to the public.

At least 75% of the project site will be open to the public.

At least 50% of the project site will be open to the public.

Additional information:

Accessibility (select all that apply)

The project site is accessible by foot, bike, scooter, etc. (connected to sidewalk or an existing public park).

The project site is accessible by public transportation.

The project site has public parking.

Additional information:

Plan Alignment

Indiciate which of the following plan goals the project supports (select all that apply)

Local comprehensive plan or master plan Date of plan:

Page #

Copy and paste relevant plan excerpt below, or provide a URL if you have one:

Regional plan

Date of plan:

Page #

Copy and paste relevant plan excerpt below, or provide a URL if you have one:

Virginia Outdoors Plan

Date of plan:

Page #

Copy and paste relevant plan excerpt below, or provide a URL if you have one:

Use the space below to briefly describe any other plans that support this project, including relevant excerpts:

Questionnaire & Supplemental Material

For questions 1–18, please limit responses to the spaces provides. Up to 20 pages of supplemental material, 5 digital photos, and/or 5 minutes of digital video/audio may be submitted to support the project proposal. The purpose of the additional material should be to inform VOF about the unique qualities of the project and the community benefitting from the project. Please do not submit full versions of local, regional or statewide plans, organizational reports or tax documents. Anything, beyond 20 pages will not be considered. See application guide for additional information and examples of support material.

Supplemental material included?

Yes

No

Questionnaire begins on the next page

Project Description

1. Describe the property, including the existing conditions (size and composition of property, natural resource values, recreational, scenic, and cultural resources, and/or significant landscape features).

2. Describe the planned method of land protection for this project (i.e., how the PTF requirement for a conveyance of real estate interest to VOF or a locality will be met)

3. List the proposed goals and objectives of the project.

4. Is this project part of a larger movement (e.g. Have other projects of a similar nature happened near this one? Is this one of many that are ongoing in this area?)

5. How will this area be managed in the future?

Community Description

6. Describe the community being served by this project. Describe the importance of this project to the community and address how this project will better serve the community.

7. Describe how the community has been involved in the development of this proposal and/or will be involved in the implementation of this project. Describe how community support is shown for this project.

8. How does this project address a specific need in the community or provide a unique service to the community?

9. List any partners or partnerships related to this project. These do not have to be groups that are financially invested in the project, just those that participate or help with any aspect of the project. Please briefly describe their involvement.

10. Provide any other information about this project that makes it unique/special. If the area has special significance to the community, please describe it here.

Schedule

11. Describe the timeline/plan of work for this project. Include who is expected to do the work and when. Work that has already been completed toward the project should be mentioned here.

Budget

12. Total cost of the project: \$

13. Total amount of funding in hand (other grants awarded, donations, in-kind services). Provide hours, rates, and values where possible.

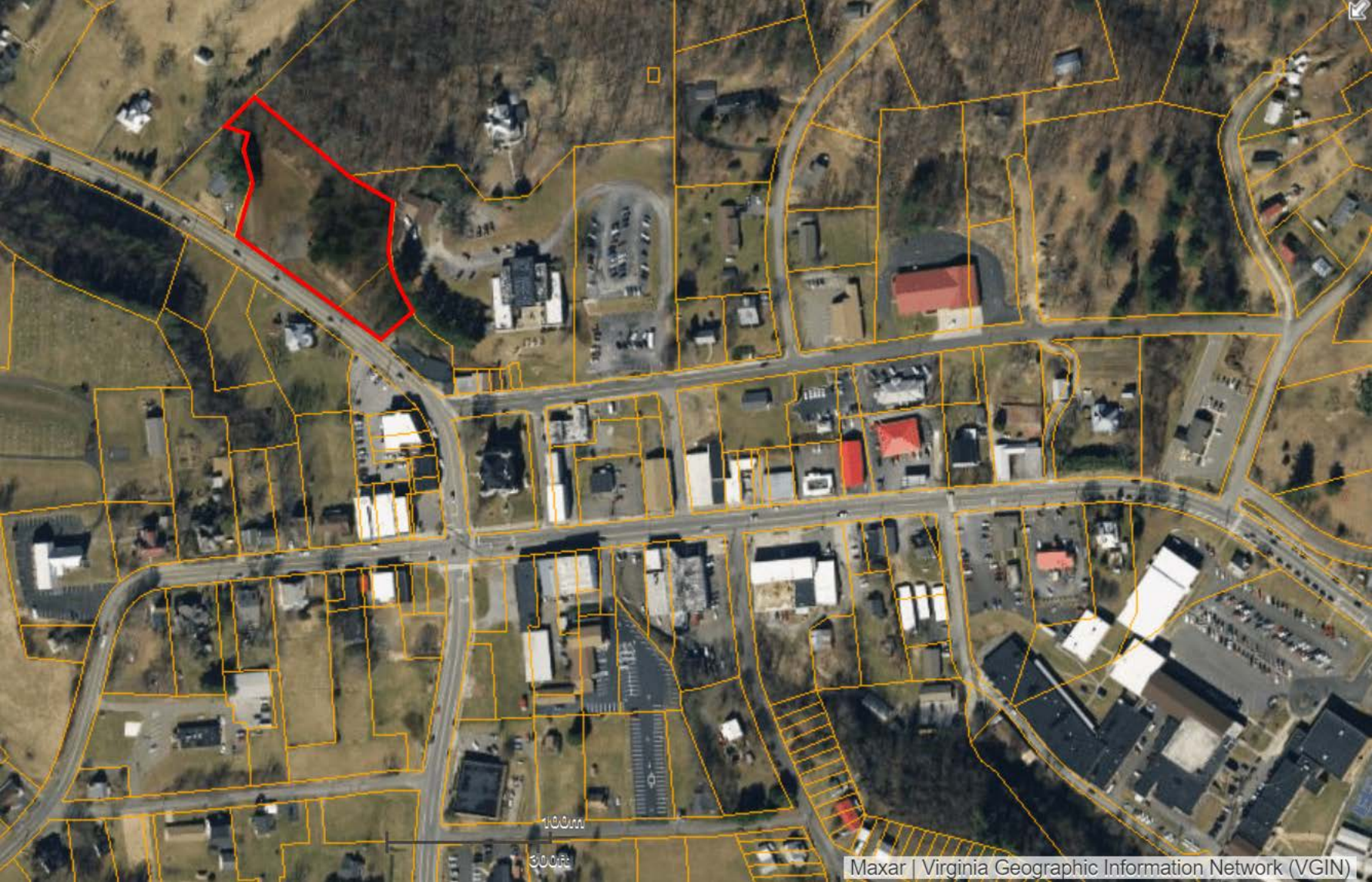
14. Amount requested from PTF:

15: Amount requested from other funding sources:

16. Describe how funds will be budgeted for this project. If the scope of the project is larger than the PTF-PA request, include any additional funding from partners, grants, volunteer hours, or materials or services donated. Note which values are requested versus secured. Provide hours, rates, and values where possible.

17. Explain if the grant funding is a key component to getting the project started or completed.

18. Address how reduced funding would impact the scope of the project. Please address viability and scope at 75% and 50% of the requested funding.



100m

300ft



Pictures from the northwestern woods line, where a potential viewing deck would be built

Supplemental Material

- 2006 Town of Independence Comprehensive Development Plan, pp. 61-62
- Mount Rogers Planning District Commission's 2018- 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, pp. 47-48
- 2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan, p. 6.3
- 2019 Strategic Plan for Downtown Independence, Virginia, p. 13
- 2018 Grayson County Virginia Comprehensive Plan, p. 13-8
- 2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan, p. 13.18
- 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment, Twin County Regional Healthcare, pp. 28, 30
- Letters of Support for a playground/expanded Powerhouse Falls Trail in Independence

Descriptions of Visual Media

Photographs

- Photograph #1 shows the size of the project site and its relation to downtown Independence
- Photographs #2-3 show the ridgeline visible from the northern end of the project site, where a potential viewing deck over the Peach Bottom Valley may be located
- Photograph #4 shows the potential locations of fitness installations throughout Grayson County

Video Responses to the Question “How would the Town benefit from a playground near downtown?”

- Video #1 – Chief James Wagoner, 30-Year Veteran of the Independence Police Department
- Video #2 – Cooper Adams, Town Resident and Student at Independence Middle School
- Video #3 – Steve Marshall, Town Resident and Owner of Paddleyax Kayaks in Downtown Independence
- Video #4 – Kit Marshall, Town Resident and Owner of Home Feathers in Downtown Independence
- Video #5 – Jeff Miller, Town Resident and Town Council Member

- f) identify all the streets not in the State system for maintenance and develop a plan for bringing them into the system,
- g) turn lane needs to be added (or traffic signal) for westbound traffic from Galax coming into town at the intersection of Rainbow Cir. & US Highway 58,
- h) the entire west end of town needs a traffic study to determine what needs to be done to manage the traffic (VDOT should be requested to conduct this study), and
- i) US Highway 21 improvements from Independence to the New River.

I. Public Facilities Conclusions and Recommendations

The provision of Public Facilities and services is the central reason for a Town to exist. In some instances the Town simply has to have a service available in order to meet that goal. In other instances the level of service and the effectiveness of its delivery is central to the identity of a Town and it's standing in the larger community. This Comprehensive Plan recognizes the need for Public Facilities and services. It also recognizes the value of planning for these services. **Recommended for action are the following:**

- a) the Town of Independence is the County Seat of Grayson County and as such it is imperative that adequate water and sewerage services be provided. Fees necessary for maintaining these services in excellent condition should be a given,
- b) the sanitary sewerage system should be updated to replace outdated and worn equipment. This system should be operated and maintained as an enterprise fund,
- c) outdated and worn water transmission lines should be replaced on a scheduled basis. This system should also be operated and maintained as an enterprise fund,
- d) the Town Council should continue to work with the Grayson County Recreation Program Director in the preparation of a program that will fully utilize the county facilities and serve all age groups and conditions,
- e) **the Town should continue to promote and encourage the construction of a hiking**

biking trail system,

- f) the Town should continue to promote the construction of additional parking adjacent to the library,
- g) the Town should continue to maintain a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County Sheriffs Office and the State Police, in particular relative to the transportation of Town arrests to and from the Regional Jail,
- h) the Town should continue to work with the County representative on the Regional Solid Waste Authority to see that a program is available for recyclable collection and disposal,
- i) the Town should continue to work with County, Regional, and State organizations to see that a Redundant supply of electricity is available to Independence,
- j) the Town should encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of the structures identified in the Grayson County Historic Study located in the town,
- k) the Town should protect historic landmarks from incompatible land uses,
- l) work with the County to extend broadband telecommunications (fiber optic and wireless) outside of the Town,
- m) work with the County and the other two (2) towns to assess the feasibility of putting all the public water systems under one management and fee system,
- n) the Town and County should explore the feasibility of a jointly owned administrative building for Town and County services, and
- o) the Town and County should continue to work on developing the New River as the primary source of water for Grayson County.

Town of Independence

Project Name	Description	Project Cost	Funding Sources	Outcomes / Jobs Created or Saved	Time Frame	Project Status				Notes
						Planning	Funded	In-Progress	Completed	
Main Street Revitalization	Downtown revitalization, economic restructuring, and removal of slum and blight	\$3M	DHCD, TIC, ED		2021	X				should compliment Park project to spur growth
Town Park - Farmers Market	Development of corner lot - Rt21 & Rt58 & constr. Of Park & Market facilities	\$500,000	ARC, EPA, DEQ, MRPPDC	foundation for revitalizing small busn & tourism business	2021	X				ARC PG completed, EPA helped with mitigation
New Sidewalks	Build sidewalks in commercial districts where sidewalks don't exist making retail businesses more	\$75K	RD	19 small businesses indicated they could possibly increase profits hoping to save 99 jobs	2021	X				TOI is making application to RD

	accessible to residential districts									
Grayson County Enhancement Trail - Phase III	Complete the trail system and connect Independence with the park providing alternative transportation for pedestrians	\$700,000	VDOT, Grayson County			2022	X	X	X	Continuation to complete trail from Industrial Lane to County Recreation Park
Grayson Agriculture and Technical Education (GATE) Center	Redevelopment of old jail to be used as multi-use facility with focus on ag/tech education	\$300,000	TRRC, MRPDC, Grayson County			2020	X	X	X	
West End McAllister Mills Building Redevelopment	Repurpose McAllister Mills west end building as a new manufacturing facility	\$150,000	Town of Independence	10 new jobs	2019	X	X	X		Town acquired building in March 2019 and business should set up shop in summer
Robert Shaw	develop old	\$1M	MRPDC, EDA, RD, Town of	60 to 120	2013/14	X	X	X	X	Oak Hall

- Addressing challenges that discourage outdoor physical activity such as lack of time, limited number of rural resources and safety.
- Aligning goals for both health and recreation to include outdoor recreation opportunities.

Recommendations

Health recommendations are primarily based on the VPWB program. Meetings of the VOP Technical Advisory Committee expanded upon VPWB recommendations in the categories of educating, engaging youth and envisioning communities for active lifestyles. Many of these recommendations may be achieved in partnership with the private sector and state and local governments. Opportunities to elevate these initiatives may be highlighted at annual regional meetings conducted by DCR.

- **Envisioning communities for active lifestyles.**
 - Integrating health planning into local and regional comprehensive planning.
 - **Improving connections to parks.**
 - Encouraging community gardens, therapeutic landscapes and healing gardens.
 - Creating walkable/bikeable communities.
 - **Creating parks, recreation facilities or open space in all neighborhoods.**

Source: VPWB

The Complete Parks Systems concept originated in 2014 under the auspices of the Healthy Eating Active Living Cities Campaign and a series of statewide brainstorming sessions held with California Parks and Recreation Society leadership. Components of the Complete Parks framework that implement Virginia Outdoors Plan and VPWB program goals include:

1. Engage residents and stakeholders in planning for parks;
2. Connect parks to neighborhoods;
3. Locate parks where they are most needed and support nearby access to recreation;
4. Activate parks through robust, relevant programming;
5. Plant and maintain sustainable and aesthetically beautiful landscaping;
6. Make parks safe from real and perceived threats of criminal activity; and
7. Fund park creation, maintenance and programming.²

Source: <http://www.changelabsolutions.org/publications/complete-parks>

- **Engaging youth.**
 - **Providing walking paths.**
 - Addressing water safety to reduce youth drownings.
 - Incorporating strategies to integrate use of electronics in outdoor recreation.
 - **Promoting outdoor play.**

Source: VPWB

- Educating the community about health through parks and recreation especially regarding:
 - Park programs
 - Tobacco control in parks
 - Youth education through sports programs by incorporating nutrition, exercise, well-being and good decision-making skills that influence positive behaviors.
 - Risks of sun exposure

Source: VPWB

LENOWISCO Health District increased opportunities for outdoor extracurricular activity for youth. They offer after-school and summer physical activity camp to low-income youth in the city of Norton. Participants are involved in archery, canoeing, fishing, hiking, and numerous other outdoor activities and classes. During the school year, the grant supports a walk-to-school event and offers bikes as prizes to select students.

Crater Health District worked with the Friends of Lower Appomattox River to increase connectivity to local trails through newly designed community signage.



Display signage for tobacco-free parklands



4.0 Downtown Vision

All of the background information, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings can be pulled together to form the following vision for downtown Independence:

Downtown Independence will become a quaint, pedestrian friendly city center with diverse retail and cultural offerings for both visitors and residents alike.

The Downtown Independence Improvement Area (DIIA) consists of the area surrounding the Historic 1908 Courthouse, with borders of the Grayson County Library to the South, Roots at Grayson Bistro and Tavern to the North, the GATE Center to the East, and Skyline Bank to the West.

The DIIA streetscape will be enhanced to create a dynamic shopping, dining and business environment. Pedestrian elements such as planters and street furniture will help to “activate” the sidewalk creating a walkable setting. Vacant buildings will become occupied and historic buildings will be restored or adaptively reused. Public and private improvements will create a new sense of place in downtown Independence. The construction of the Independence Town Park, Farmers Market, and Pedestrian Mall will be an integral part of the project, as well as VDOT’s 58/21 Intersection Improvements, which will include safe, warning signal pedestrian crossings.

Downtown Independence will become a “base camp” for tourism and recreation activity in Grayson County and the region. Independence will promote itself as the center of the Blue Ridge region attracting tourists to stay in local hotels and bed & breakfasts, dine in local restaurants - all while enjoying regional tourism attractions such as the Grayson Highlands State Park. Independence’s musical traditions will be promoted through the Crooked Road Trail as well as local festivals and events. Independence will celebrate its mountain heritage through interpreting its culture not only to visitors, but also to local residents, creating a continued sense of community pride and ongoing appreciation for its history.

The Town of Independence will focus on the recruitment of new business creating a healthy mix of retail, service businesses, and office uses in downtown. A variety of new restaurants and shops will open offering expanded hours and creating day and evening activity in downtown. Economic development and revitalization of the downtown will be based on true opportunities, market indicators, and trends. Independence will have 100% occupancy on at least the first floors of downtown buildings, ultimately creating business and residential opportunities on upper floors. Business development and retention programs will be established through local agencies to ensure that existing and future businesses will continue to be successful. The high-tech fiber optic infrastructure will be promoted to recruit diverse businesses and make downtown Independence once again the center of the economy life for the community.

The revitalization of downtown Independence will be the result of a collaborative effort of a number of economic development entities. Local government agencies, business associations, public/private organizations will have clearly defined tasks and benchmarks. Tourism, heritage

Transportation

See Chapter 7

Goal: Support a sustainable transportation system that links highways, transit, greenways, sidewalks and bike trails to provide multimodal transportation options.

Summary

Grayson County's primary method of transportation is the road system, of which a large portion is supported by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). VDOT maintains, supports, and develops state roads and road infrastructure within the county. The SMART SCALE transportation program has shown how imperative it is for the County to work closely with VDOT to develop the most economical and common-sense solutions to solve transportation issues. The County's collaboration with District Three Governmental Cooperative and its Mountain Lynx public transit are instrumental in providing public transportation options to residents and have the potential to be expanded within the county. In addition to roads and public transit, the rise in outdoor recreation and tourism in recent years has created numerous opportunities for the County to improve bicycling and pedestrian transportation.

Strategies

- 7-1 Continue to work with Virginia Department of Transportation to develop, design, and implement transportation projects, including, but not limited to, SMART SCALE, Highway Safety, Bike Pedestrian Safety, and Transportation Alternatives projects.
- 7-2 Continue efforts to support the Twin County Airport (TCA).
- 7-3 Develop School System Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize transportation and facility improvement projects.
- 7-4 Partner with Towns to expand bicycling and pedestrian transportation options.
- 7-5 Analyze the need for Park & Ride locations and support public transit/ridesharing infrastructure when cost effective.
- 7-6 Consider policy that reduces strip development and multiple entrances to the state highways for safety concerns.
- 7-7 Proceed with Phase III of the Independence Pedestrian and Bike Trail. (See 8-4)
- 7-8 Use GIS to understand guardrail needs for reoccurring safety concerns.
- 7-9 Amend administrative process for rezones to include site plans and review/interaction with VDOT for rezone applications. (See 11-9)
- 7-10 Continue supporting District Three and Mountain Lynx and encourage citizen participation through marketing efforts.



Regional Health

Table 3.5 Health Trends

Mount Rogers Recreational Planning Region

locality	adult smoking (% of adults)	adult obesity (% of adults with BMI over 30)	physical inactivity (% of adults age 20 or over reporting no leisure time/ physical activity)	access to exercise opportunities (% population with adequate access to locations for physical activity)	air pollution – particulate matter (micrograms per cubic meter)
Bland County	15.00	31	25	100	8.4
Carroll County	19.00	29	25	43	8.6
Grayson County	19.00	30	32	45	8.4
Washington County	18.00	30	27	67	9.4
Smyth County	19.00	30	28	76	8.6
Wythe County	17.00	31	27	66	8.6
City of Bristol	19.00	27	25	97	9.3
City of Galax	19.00	26	25	90	8.3
Statewide	17.00	27	21	81	8.7

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Outdoor Recreation Interface with Virginia Tourism

The Virginia State Tourism Plan was completed by Virginia Tourism Corp. in March 2013. In 2017, Virginia Tourism compiled “Nature & Outdoors” recommendations in Appendix 13 for each recreation planning region.

Regional Historic Resources

The Mount Rogers region is named for the highest peak in Virginia, and contains a wide range of historic resources associated with its agricultural, transportation and resource extraction histories. Properties associated with the American Revolution and the Civil War can be found in this region, as can sites representative of thousands of years of occupation prior to the arrival of European immigrants. Population centers such as Bristol and Abingdon contain historic hotels, theaters, shops and courthouses reflective of their status as business headquarters as well as travel destinations. Rural areas contain historic farmsteads, grist mills, barns and bridges.

Appropriate conservation activities may include installation of highway markers to commemorate historic locations and events, placement of historic properties on the Virginia Landmarks Register or National Register of Historic Places and placement of historic preservation and open space easements. Conservation targets include: 19th century farmsteads, dwellings and commercial

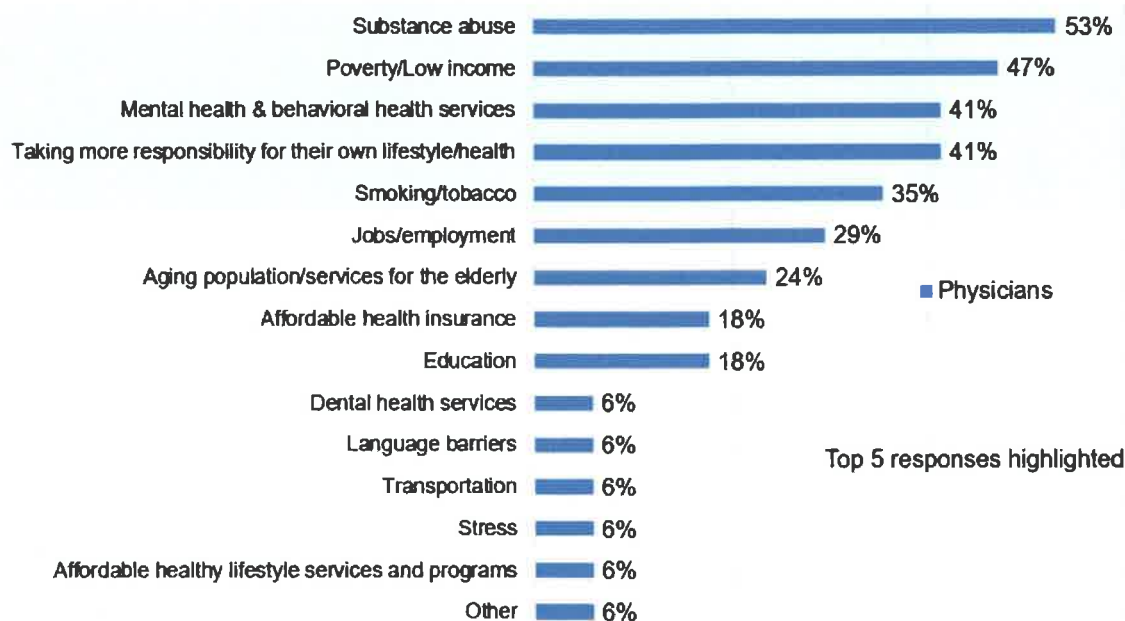
buildings/districts; late 19th and early 20th century company towns and coal camps; and significant prehistoric habitation sites. Information about historic buildings, structures and archaeological sites is maintained in the permanent files of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and is available to local planners.

Table 3.6 Regional Historic Resources

Mount Rogers Recreational Planning Region

resource	location
Lincoln Theater	Smyth County
White's Mill	Washington
Muster Ground and Retirement	Town of Abingdon
Grayson County Courthouse	Grayson County
Saltville Battlefields Historic District	Wythe and Washington Counties

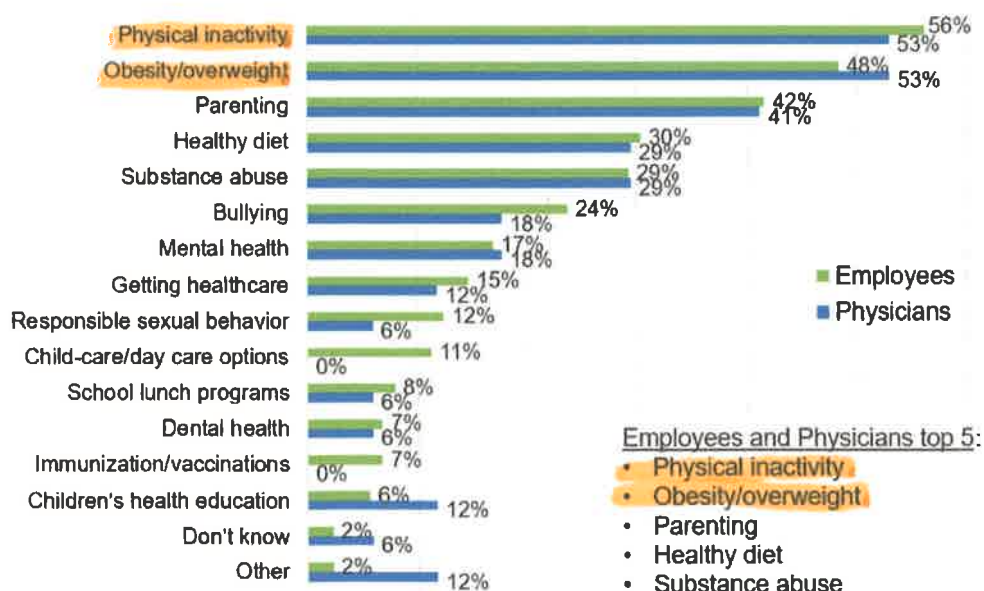
Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources



top issues impacting health in the community.

Physicians believed substance abuse, followed by poverty/low income, mental health and behavior health services, and taking more responsibility for their own lifestyle health were the top issues impacting health in the community.

Top Concerns for Children



What are the top three health concerns for children in your community?

Employees believed healthcare resources for the uninsured or poor, followed by affordable insurance and healthcare would be most beneficial to the community. Physicians believed substance abuse services, followed by nutrition/diet education, and behavioral health services would be most beneficial.

Health Status Data

Based on the 2018 County Health Rankings study performed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Virginia,¹ Galax City ranked 117th healthiest County in Virginia out of the 133 counties ranked (1= the healthiest; 133 = unhealthiest), 131st for health outcomes and 103rd for health factors. Carroll County ranked 71st healthiest county in Virginia, 67th for health outcomes and 75th for health factors. Grayson County ranked 86th healthiest county in Virginia, 85th for health outcomes and 87th for health factors.

County Health Rankings suggest the areas to explore for improvement in Galax City were: higher adult smoking, higher percentage of uninsured, lower percentage of adults with some college, higher percentage of unemployment, higher number of teen births, and higher percentage of children in poverty. The areas of strength were identified as lower adult obesity percentage, lower percentage of physical inactivity, lower percentage of excessive drinking, lower percentage of alcohol-impaired driving deaths, higher percentage of access to exercise opportunities, higher percentage of flu vaccinations, and lower ratios of mental health providers and dentists per population.

County Health Rankings suggest the areas to explore for improvement in Carroll County were: higher adult smoking, higher adult obesity percentage, higher percentage of uninsured, lower percentage of adults with some college, higher percentage of children in poverty, and higher percentage of unemployment. The areas of strength were identified as lower percentage of physical inactivity, higher food environment index, higher percentage of flu vaccinations, lower ratio of primary care physicians per population.

County Health Rankings suggest the areas to explore for improvement in Grayson County were: higher adult smoking, higher adult obesity percentage, higher physical inactivity percentage, higher percentage of uninsured, lower percentage of adults with some college, higher percentage of children in poverty, lower flu vaccination percentage, and larger ratio of primary care physicians per population. The areas of strength were identified as lower percentage of excessive drinking, lower number of sexually transmitted infections, and higher high school graduation percentage.

When analyzing the health status data, local results were compared to Virginia, the U.S. (where available), and the top 10% of counties in the U.S. (the 90th percentile). Where Galax City, Carroll, and Grayson Counties' results were worse than VA and U.S., groups and individuals have an opportunity to act and improve these community measures. To become the healthiest community in Virginia and eventually the Nation, Galax City, Carroll and Grayson Counties must close several lifestyle gaps. For additional perspective, Virginia was ranked the 20th healthiest state out of the 50 states. (Source: 2018 America's Health Rankings) Virginia strengths were low violent crime rate, high immunization coverage among children, and low prevalence of excessive drinking. Virginia challenges were lower rate of mental health providers, high percentage of uninsured population, and



ISRAEL O'QUINN
POST OFFICE BOX 16325
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24209

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS
COMMERCE AND LABOR
MILITIA, POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

FIFTH DISTRICT

January 17, 2019

Town Manager Reid Walters
Town of Independence
317 East Main Street
PO BOX 99
Independence VA 24348

Town Manager Walters,

I am writing to show my support for the Town of Independence's application for a Community Development Block Grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for the Downtown Revitalization Project. This will be a great boost to the Town, and I look forward to seeing all the great things that will come from this grant.

If awarded this grant, I know that the Town of Independence will use the money to fund a variety of things including: the town park which will have a large, open-air multi-use shelter that will host the farmers market, the "Uncle Wade Old-Time Stage" to serve as a stage for musical and community events, and a playground. These projects will further the town's progress and make it an even better place to live and visit.

Thank you for all you do for Independence and for your hard work in applying for this grant. I truly hope it comes to fruition. If I can be of assistance in the future, do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Israel O'Quinn", followed by a horizontal line.

Israel O'Quinn
Deputy Majority Whip
Virginia House of Delegates



Twin County
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Together to Thrive!

Reid Walters, Town Manager
317 East Main Street
Independence, Virginia 24348

February 15, 2019

Dear Mr. Walters:

It is with enthusiasm that I submit this letter of support on behalf of the membership of the Twin County Chamber of Commerce. As a public face and promoter of business within our region, the Chamber is committed to strengthening the communities it serves which includes the town of Independence in Grayson County.

There is a new vitality in downtown Independence – a vibrancy which is supported by local elected officials, community leaders and the residents in and near the town. The Historic 1908 Courthouse is the centerpiece which drives entertainment and heritage events in this community. Surrounding the courthouse is a myriad of businesses which attract local shoppers as well as visitors enjoying Mt. Rogers, the Virginia Highlands and the New River. The proposed streetscape improvement and the development of a town park will truly make Independence a destination for those visiting southwest Virginia while infusing a new energy among residents and merchants in town.

The proposed "Uncle Wade Old-Time Stage" will provide a much-needed performance space along the "Crooked Road" which honors this region as the cradle of traditional music. Placed in the home of the most popular regional farmer's market, the stage will complete the designated space, joining it with the local library and proposed playground for children. This will create the hub for all to gather – a vital component to the creation of community. This community development project will create a catalyst for business growth, community centeredness and further economic development.

As the Executive Director of the Twin County Chamber of Commerce, I request your support of the Community Development Block Grant for the town of Independence.

Respectfully,

Beth Dixon

Executive Director

Twin County Chamber of Commerce

Dear Mr. Walters,

We are supportive of the development of the Town Park development. The Independence Farmers Market has been a great addition to the life of Independence. Many people visit the town on Fridays during the summer. As vendors, we talk to our customers, and find that many of them are summer vacationers, tourists, and others who have heard about the vitality of our market and bring their dollars to spend with us. Other businesses also are the beneficiaries of these visitors.

In addition to the area designated for the Farmers Market, the proposed additions of a playground and open-air stage will provide needed facilities in the downtown area; expanded parking at the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library is a must, as is additional customer parking near the park.

The Town of Independence can do so much to increase its attractiveness and appeal to visitors and local alike. This Block Grant and its improvements will go a long way to improving Independence's appearance and appeal.

Thank you for pursuing this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Mickey & Tina Cunningham
Bear Tree Farm (Honey Vendors)
155 Bear Tree Lane
Troutdale, VA 24378
276-579-2123

Nancy Harris
911 Copper Line Road
Bumpass, Va 23024

January 25, 2019

Dear Mr. Walters,

I am writing in support of developing a Town Park through grant monies. A downtown revitalization project is an excellent idea especially if you qualify and are granted the Community Development Block Grant.

I am a "part-time" resident here in Grayson and look forward to the farmers market every year. It is on my "must do" list when friends and family come visit during the summer. How neat it would be to have a Town Park with shelter for those rainy Fridays and a place for children to play. An open-air multiuse shelter would provide a great bridge from the public library to the historic courthouse which could encourage guest and residents to visit both places while in town. You guys do a great job in the streetscape department but with additional funding it would be great to see flower boxes and signage.

Good luck with the grant.

Sincerely,



Nancy Harris



Skyline National Bank

Twin County Community Foundation
The Crossroads Institute
1117 East Stuart Drive, Suite 145
Galax, VA 24333


Date: June 29, 2021

Re: Playground equipment Grant

Dear Members of the Twin County Community Foundation:

Skyline National Bank has entered into an agreement where we are deeding approximately 2 acres to the Town of Independence. The Property is on route 21 north inside the Town of Independence. As part of the transaction Skyline National Bank is gifting as a gift in kind of \$7,000 to keep the price point affordable to the Town. Through the years the Bank has been supportive of the Town and likewise the Town has been supportive of our Bank. Given that said Skyline National Bank supports grant funding to support this effort of the playground equipment requested.

Always our Best,


Rodney R. Halsey
EVP/COO



Grayson County
Planning & Community Development

129 Davis Street
P.O. Box 217
Independence, Virginia 24348

Phone (276) 773-2471
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June 30, 2021

Twin County Regional Hospital Foundation
P.O. Box 1131
Galax, VA 24333

Dear Foundation Board,

I write on behalf of Grayson County Planning and Community Development in support of the Twin County Hospital Foundation to fund the development of the North Independence Park and complete the ingress of Peach Bottom Trail.

Receiving funding will enhance the already existing phase of the trail through the Town of Independence into Grayson County. When complete, the North Independence Park will be the trailhead's focal point, leading pedestrians and bicycles to approximately three miles of trail systems ending at Peach Bottom Falls Park.

Grayson County Planning and Community Development encourages your funding support as our community will benefit from safe routes, health, and wellbeing to a unified trail system.

Respectfully,

Jada C. Black
Director of Planning/Zoning